-97.

#3

A

Treatise

on

Dyspepsia.

Maxwell Chambers

N. Carolina.

Waddell.

S. Fisher.

From the important function which the stomach performs in the animal oeconomy, and from its being an organ so essential to life, a consideration of the causes which tend to produce a derangement of its operations must necessarily constitute a subject highly interesting to medical science. As it is upon the healthy operations of this viscus more than upon any other in the system, that man is indebted for much of the pleasure & happiness which he enjoys in this life; so all must admit the importance, & perceive the necessity of an investigation of its disorders, that their existence may be readily known & distinguished & that our exertions or attempts to remedy or relieve them, may be conducted upon just & scientific principles. From the intimate connexion which exists between the stomach & every other part of the body by means of blood vessels & nerves & from its preeminent sympathy over them all, it is rendered liable to disease from a greater variety of causes, than any other part of the human fabric. The various morbid affections which occasionally exist in this organ, are not intended to be investigated or considered in this essay. But the nature of that disease, which has been called by Nosologist Dyspepsia, with the means best adapted to remedy or relieve it, will more particularly constitute the subject of the subsequent observations. As my design is to give merely a brief history of the disease, my own ideas, together with such as I have acquired from Authors who have written on the subject, will be condensed as much as is any how compatible with clearness & perspicuity. Having delivered these preliminary remarks,

I will now proceed with the more particular consideration of the subject before me.

The first circumstance which arrests our attention in viewing the phenomena of this disease & which solicits investigation, is the "pars in qua" of morbid excitement. Upon this point several opinions have been entertained. Some have supposed it to be seated almost exclusively in the muscular fibres of the stomach, others placed it in the nervous coat, while a few have maintained its existence to be principally in the blood-vessels, villous coat &c. Without adopting either of these opinions, I am induced to believe, that in every case of well marked dyspepsia morbid excitement is present in all the parts appertaining to the stomach, though the degree of this excitement, is no doubt, often very different in each of them. I take this opinion to be well founded; from the phenomena exhibited by the disease. Thus, do not the irritability, torpor, morbid sympathies & morbid secretions, together with the irregularity in the pulse, all indicate the existence of morbid & irregular action in the several parts named above? The intimate connexion which exists between the several parts of the stomach, & the known influence of sympathy in every part of the body, but more particularly in the organs, give additional assistance in confirmation of the truth of the opinion. As the shortness of my time precludes the possibility of collecting & arranging the various arguments & facts that might be adduced in its favour; I shall for the present consider it as established, & will go on to enumerate the causes which induce it. And first of the remote causes.

These may be divided into direct & indirect, or such as act immediately upon the stomach itself & such as act through the

medium of the system in inducing debility in this viscus. To the first order of Causes belong. 1st Improper diet. 2d Excess in Eating. 3d Improper use of narcotic substances as opium, tobacco &c. 4th Frequent vomiting, whether naturally occurring or artificially excited. 5th The too frequent use of sugar, acids & other crude substances. Of the second order of causes, these are 1st The severe attack of an acute disease. 2d An indolent or sedentary life. 3d Excessive indulgence of the venereal desires. 4th The constant application of the mind to study or business of any kind. 5th Frequent indulgence of the angry passions, as hatred, anger, jealousy, revenge, as also the seductive passions of fear, grief & despair; to which may be not add the divine & tender passion of love? 6th Exposure to cold & moist air without exercise. The seperate or combined action of these causes upon the stomach, produce in it debility, which forms its predispo-sing cause to disease

Among the exciting causes I may enumerate, heat, cold, distension, abstinence, &c; and indeed any of the utmost causes may become the exciting cause. These causes acting upon an accumulated excitability, which is the effect or consequence of debility produce the proximat cause or morbus ipse. This is characterized by the following symptoms. These I shall divide into primary & secondary or such as appear in the Chylopoietic viscera & such as appear in other parts of the body from sympathy. To the first belongs acidity, heat in the stomach, acrid eructations, eructation of a thin watery fluid, frequent vomiting, flatulence, a rancid state of the alimentary matter, spasms in the intestines, cholic, obstinate costiveness or alternation of costiveness & diarrhoea, borborygmi & the passage of the food through the intestines without it, undergoing

2. Of such symptoms as occur in other parts of the body. These are vertigo, furred tongue, this is particularly observable in the morning is an unerring criterion of a disordered state of the digestive organs, swimming in the head, dimness of sight, pains in the balls of the eyes headache, an early & rapid decay of the teeth, sallow complexion, pain in the epigastric region, this however is often absent even in advanced stages of the disease; pulmonary consumption, shifting pains, tremors in the hands, small cutaneous pustular eruptions particularly about the wrists & thighs, flushings affecting the whole body or particular part of it, shiverings, palpitation of the heart, syncope, cold feet, pulse irregular, quick, feeble & intermitting, sometimes no evident perspiration from the most violent exercise at other times copious sweat from moderate exercise, liability to be affected by changes in the weather, great drowsiness, irregular & interrupted sleep & great wakefulness. Of the symptoms which particularly appear in the mind. There are great irritability, habitual discouragement, low spirits, timidity, anxiety, irresolution, fickleness, fretfulness, taciturnity sadness, imperfect memory, strange whims, proneness to reverie, frequent strange & incoherent dreams & lastly settled melancholy. These are all the symptoms which I have seen, or which I have observed mentioned by such authors as I have read on the subject. There is perhaps no case in which all these occur, yet in severe cases of long continuance, I have no doubt but that most of them are present at some period of the disease.

An ulcer or schirrus of the stomach may sometimes be confounded with dyspepsia; but the former may always be distinguished from the latter, by the continuance of the pain in ulcer or schirrus without any exception, & from the patient's experiencing no relief from such

The seat, causes, symptoms & diagnosis have now been stated. I come next to consider the treatment, regard to remedy, correction &c.

Here the first thing indicated is the removal of the immediate exciting causes. The necessity of this indication is sufficiently obvious. The management of long years in this, as almost in every other disease, are always increased as the causes which induced it are allowed to continue their exertion. The physician should therefore, among other, when the mind of the patient the actual necessity of attending to this indication, as a compliance with it is of the most serious importance to the successful management of dyspepsia. But to persuade patients to renounce such habits as they have often indulged in with impunity, is a task which is sometimes very difficult to accomplish. As the advantage to be gained by the practitioner in securing the cooperation of the patient is of such immense importance, he should consider the attainment of it as constituting "dimidium opus". Hence, then, the first to remove such symptoms, as more especially continue to increase & aggravate the disease. The seat of them is actually in the stomach. This is one of the most painful and distressing symptoms of the disease, & is shewn by a sense of more than as a uneasy sensation in the stomach, a sensation of emptiness, irregular appetite, flatulency, acidity, costiveness, headache, and circulation too quick, to which may add the other affections of the mind as also some other of the chylopoietic viscera. To effect the removal of this symptom two things are to be done. The first is to remove it from the stomach when it, there, gives such quality, & to become healthy. The next is to prevent its regeneration. The remedies proper in the first case are the tartarics & calomel with the aid of the most effec-

are proper. For the purpose of heartburn & sour water, but as the remedy cannot always be commanded, that the carbonate of potash or soda may be used as a substitute, & in the long continued use of the latter, the effect of debilitating the stomach I would recommend that the use be occasionally alternated with magnesia, lime water &c. or mixture of all. The combination of the last article is a very great remedy for the sickness & vomiting, so the acetate is sometimes quite remarkably the stomach, whether in nitric acid solution or in the form of pills. Further surprise. To prevent its reproduction after it is removed is hence an object of great importance and is consequently of great attainment. The manner in which this is produced has not as yet been satisfactorily explained. It is stated that the sometimes the product of an acetous fermentation in the stomach is not depositing, but it frequently occurs, particularly in old inveterate cases of the disease under circumstances in which this precipitant have taken place. An explanation of the production under such circumstances has been attempted by Dr. Wright who has written a very excellent paper on the subject. He supposes it to be the effect of morbid secretion of the gastric liquor. As I am in part disposed to adopt the opinion, I will enumerate some of the arguments which the author has stated. He appears to think that in the cases of acidity from fermentation, the gastric juice is of a more or less acrid nature. But that there is with a sharp & corrosive acid without being accompanied with it, that the patient continues weeks, months, & even years without material complaint of the stomach & the rate of stools very regular & not inconsiderable. From its frequent occurring when there is no fermentation or pressure in the stomach & from the effect which severe & steady pain produces, it is stated probable the secretion that it is

[illegible] to the producer of evil so suddenly induced and attended with such dreadful consequences. It would seem to me time to state the so called facts, [illegible] I must refer the reader to [illegible] more satisfactory acquaintance with the subject of the original paper, published in the "Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts & Sciences."

Believe the source of the production, whether it be from a metallic or metallic secretion of the gastric juice, or a decomposition of the fluids, all point out the necessity of an attention to a means of preventing it. That the quantity & quality of this acid is much influenced by the aliment employed, is a fact so well known to medical men as to render any further circumstances of it superfluous. The limits of this paper preclude a particular account of the various articles employed to obtain it & shall therefore give a general view of such articles, as are most convenient & proper for persons taking water, applicable to patients. There are two, milder, salt other aromatic Gas, iron, lactic, sugar milk, isolated, nice to such & may add air the Gas is most convenient. There are two articles, which are to serve as a secure use, an exp. all Cases of Scurvy & the accidents etc. & [illegible] are so little answer to, that I cannot pass them by in this place. They are to be [illegible] the literature of their substance, more than to any other such substitute, a part only of which I think we may prove to be the [illegible] [illegible] appear, which are not so favorable, but will in a [illegible] perpetuation of life. The environment spare nor [illegible] forbidden to a person who is in any manner precisely [illegible] the digestive organs. The quantity of food

to be taken at one time should also be attended to. The intervals [illegible]
more than a period of the stomach are necessarily adapted to [illegible] by
attending to the rules. The injurious effects that might otherwise arise
from indigestible matter in a state of the stomach may
completely avoided. The time of taking food should be regulated solely
by the appetite, whenever an inclination is manifested for it
it should always be indulged. It should never be allowed to continue
empty as by this means the debility which it is our object to relieve would
be thereby greatly increased. In the subject of drinks, it is proper that
I should make some remarks. Here without hesitation I recommend the
properties of wind water. The Elixir that has yet been discovered has so
powerful an effect in promoting the process of digestion, or of producing
that tranquility & regularity throughout the system essential to the
full enjoyment of life as this. Though it be possessed of such invaluable
virtues yet there are cases where its use would be highly injurious.
This in a very low & indolent state of the stomach, water in excess
or a drink would aggravate rather than remedy the evil. In such cases
also where the patient has previously been attacked with a disorder
of the digestive organs, been in the habit of using wine, brandy or any
other kind of ardent spirits at his meals, it would be highly injurious
sudden to substitute water in their place. For the stomach is an
highly irritable organ, & where it has been long accustomed to
stimulus of any kind, if it be suddenly withdrawn, it becomes
turbulent & restless, and if not allayed by a gratification of its wants
it will become tumultuous & commotion throughout the system.
Such persons [illegible] in the practice is very strong
& stimulating drinks, will their mean. I would recommend that
the water, the spirits be gradually [illegible]

I have thus given an outline of the system of diet usually [illegible] in removing [illegible] under [illegible] the digestive organs [illegible] so great a difference in the powers of the digestive organs [illegible] there are so many peculiarities, & idiosyncrasies [illegible] never [illegible] in the same manner in [illegible] two persons. I think however [illegible], that any system of diet can be [illegible] that will be adapted to every case of morbid derangement of the stomach. From the circumstance & from the influence of habit & inclination in regulating the action of the stomach I would suggest the [illegible] to the patient detailed [illegible] systema alimentarum [illegible] the other [illegible] would certainly ought to require a more correct knowledge of the powers of the stomach in the management of different articles of food & to point out the exact [illegible] [illegible] arrangement I would by no means however exclude the exercise of the judgment of the physician, for the direction of [illegible] most [illegible]

Another of the symptoms which requires to be commented upon is costiveness. This symptom very commonly occurs [illegible] is sometimes of long duration. To remove it mild purgatives should be employed. The most proper for this purpose are rhubarb & magnesia [illegible] merely to excite the action of the bowels to such a degree as will produce one or two evacuations in twenty four hours [illegible] of health. The [illegible] When given at [illegible] their operation is not [illegible] generally produce their effect at that period in the morning at which the [illegible] health [illegible]

When in the stomach [illegible] there is often a very troublesome spasmodic symptom. It appears to be merely the effect of fermentation of the substances in the stomach [illegible] and which would be likely to promote the process. It may generally be removed either by the use of alkaline medicines &c. or it be accompanied with heartburn a few drops of the oil of peppermint or of anise dropped on a lump of loaf sugar & taken will generally be found in most instances sufficient.

Diarrhoea has generally arisen from a large quantity of acid being present in the stomach. This may be in most cases to be relieved by using magnesia & opium taken in small doses. The only large quantities of unripe fruit or even of dried or sour wine is the best preventive this symptom. They should therefore be always forbidden.

Having stated the directions which are given for the removal of urgent symptoms, I come next to consider the best means of restoring the strength of the stomach. This is to be effected by medicines which have a direct operation upon the stomach, & such as strengthen the organs through the medium of the system. Mineral acids have often been found very useful & to be successful. Great care should be observed in their use as they are liable to produce very serious effects to the teeth. The antiseptics will sometimes prove very useful in removing debility of the stomach, but its value in this respect will be greatly increased by combining it with extract of the peruvian bark. Quassia is another bitter many persons prefer for its agreeable effects in increasing the tone of the stomach, & thus indirectly facilitates the process of digestion. This one of the most valuable medicines belonging to the class of tonics & should be therefore [illegible] there is depression [illegible]

A number of other articles seem to be occasionally taken at different times, by different persons, as occasion will admit, or as appetite; but as none of these, so far as I am acquainted, have required any regulation for this purpose, I deem an enumeration of them unnecessary.

In cases of dyspepsia, when there are symptoms of an affection of the liver, and such cases, I believe, are not unfrequent; mercury, employed in some of its forms, & in such quantity as merely to touch the gum, has often proved a most invaluable remedy. Even in old & obstinate cases, where every other remedy had failed, I have known mercury to have been used with the effect of producing permanent relief. In such cases, it should be given in small doses, & persevered in for a considerable time. I might perhaps feel a delicacy in urging the employment of the medicine, had not the high authority of Drs Rush, Hosack & McNevin, all of whom bear the strongest testimony of its efficacy, in relieving diseases of the digestive organs. Which of the preparations of mercury is best suited for this purpose, I am unable to determine. The preparation which I have seen employed with so much advantage, was calomel in combination with rhubarb & opium. It was generally taken just before the patient went to bed, & always had the effect of producing a regular evacuation of the bowels one in the twenty four hours.

The cases where the employment of this remedy is more particularly indicated, are all such as exhibit symptoms of a diseased liver or pancreas, or where the disease has continued for a considerable length of time, & where the torpor of the part, require some powerful alterative. What would be ~~its efficacy~~ the propriety of the employment in more recent cases of the disease is a question which I am wholly unprepared to answer. I [illegible] to believe however that it would be prejudicial.

Another remedy which I would recommend is blood letting. To Dr. Wa.. believe we are indebted for the discovery of this remedy. From the beneficial effects which he has derived from its employment, & from the success which has attended its use by other practitioners, I am inclined to believe that the lancet will in skillful hands, become one of the most powerful instruments that has yet been discovered in subduing this perverse and obstinate disease. The state of the pulse has still continued, to be too much overlooked by practitioners in their treatment of this disease. From the irregularity & sometimes tension of the pulse in diseases of the digestive organs, I am disposed to suspect that there sometimes exists a congestion in the vessels of the stomach.. and may not such congestion have existed in those cases, where blood-letting proved so highly successful? This question solicits a reply from those who have witnessed the cases, in which the lancet was used.

I come in the last place to speak of the importance of exercise in removing debility & of increasing the strength & tone of the system. As the state of the mind has such a powerful influence over the operation of the body, & as it is in general so materially affected in this disease, an attention to the means of counteracting its baneful effects, naturally suggests itself in this place. For as the poet Armstrong has very aptly observed "To please the fancy is no trifling aid,

"Mind health is studied; for whatever moves
"The mind with calm delight, promotes the just
"And natural movements of the harmonious frame.

To dispel the gloom which usually overcasts the mind in the disease, cheerful society should be recommended, where the mind might be pleasantly amused without becoming tired or fatigued. Travelling through romantic or well cultivated Coun-

will by presenting to the mind a succession of new & interesting objects, have the happiest effect in diverting it from the melancholy thoughts in which it is prone to indulge, & by the exercise with which it is accompanied, will impart strength & vigour to the system. To obtain however the greatest possible benefit from travelling the dyspeptic should procure an intelligent & pleasant companion. Where this is too expensive or where it cannot be conveniently undertaken riding or a tolerable hard trotting horse for several miles every day, will frequently be found very serviceable.

A sea voyage has been recommended & in some cases, it is said to have been attended with the happiest effects. Of this mode of exercise however I must observe that I do not entertain a very favourable opinion. Because the exercise of the body is in this case merely passive & the mind from having little to occupy it would naturally be inclined to dwell upon the disease & by this means aggravate instead of alleviating its symptoms. Another objection of greater force is the costiveness which usually attends most persons when at sea.

When convenient, cultivating a small garden will be found a very agreeable way of taking exercise. If the patient can become so much engaged, or to feel interested in the success of his labours, I am persuaded that it would prove one of the most powerful means that has been yet suggested in removing chronic debility of the stomach. Walking pretty briskly for a mile or two every day, is in some cases very useful. Cutting, sawing or splitting wood is a very excellent way of exercising the body. In cases where from the badness of the weather or other causes the patient cannot take exercise in the open air, there is a play called battle

door, that affords a very pleasant exercise, and is to be particularly recommended from its exciting a little interest & solicitude in the mind, without producing any demoralizing effect. The manner in which this is played is so familiarly known to most persons, as to render any description unnecessary. There are a great many other modes of taking exercise which may be resorted to with advantage, which have not been here noticed, & which may be found described by different authors.

In employing exercise of any kind, care should be taken, never to carry it to the extent of inducing fatigue, it should likewise never be used when the stomach is empty, as prejudicial effects would thereby be induced. Whatever be the mode of exercise, the patient should always be attentive in keeping the feet warm & dry. The time most proper for taking exercise, is about two hours after taking breakfast & about the same time after dinner.

With this I conclude the subject, being fully aware that a great deal more might be said upon the nature & treatment of this disease which has not been noticed in this essay. as the fluctuating state of my health has prevented me from investigating the nature of this disease so extensively, as I could have wished, or of arranging what I had collected on the subject in the system & order that was intended, I submit the essay with all its crudities & imperfections, relying much upon the candour & liberality of those by whom it is to be judged.